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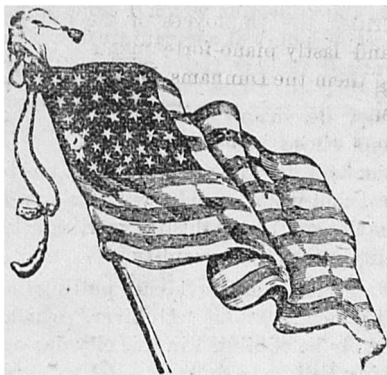
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# Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1867.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, 806 BROADWAY.



We have raised our flag in commemoration of a great National triumph.

It is a proud fact to record, that in competition with all the world, with the great firms, who have had the experience of a century and a half, our piano-forte manufacturers have won for America, *two* of the much coveted Grand Gold Medals, out of only *five* awarded among hosts of exhibitors in that department.

To appreciate the glory of this fact, it must be remembered, that the manufacturing of piano-fortes dates back hardly fifty years in this country, and that while Europe has had its great Conservatories, and its thousands of creative and executive artists, whose works and wondrous skill, as it were, forced on the development of the instrument, Conservatories we have had none, and our noteworthy artists might be counted by tens.

We had only the natural incentive to excel—the determination not only not to be behind in the race, but to be a whole length ahead at the winning post. And we have not fallen short of our ambition, for if we take the aggregate opinion of the people of all nations present at the Great Exposition in Paris, of the scientific papers, and the most eminent artists of Paris, the American Pianos have created a sensation altogether unparelleled, literally absorbing the attention and interest of the daily throng of visitors to the Exposition, to the, almost, utter exclusion of objects of more vital and universal importance. It is true that with the Paris press, the elaborate articles on the subject were devoted to the consideration of the relative excellence of the American competitors, compared with each other; they carefully avoided comparison with instruments of European make; but while all the sterling and acknowledged authorities of the Parisian press gave their well considered verdicts in favor of the Chickering pianos, condemning the overstrung principle in the Steinway Grands, as producing positive confusion of vibration, proclaiming it

not only bad, but showing that it was old, that it had been tested by the best European makers, and abandoned as worthless, still the admitted excellence of each instrument, the superior qualities conceded and elaborately illustrated in the articles published, was evidence incontrovertible, that the pianos of the American firm and of the German firm hailing from America, had no superiors, if any equals of European manufacture.

We feel profound contentment at the result of this international competition, because we think the judgment was entirely just. That Chickering's pianos should receive the superior award to Steinways', was reasonably to be expected, where both were to be submitted to the critical examination and test of refined and competent judges, who looked to the aesthetic qualities, the sympathetic, sensitive mobility of tone, and the pure and distinct intonation of every part of the scale, rather than to the mere brute force of the instrument, but still the Steinways may feel well satisfied to come second to Chickering, as, on this occasion, they came out equal with the others who have received the Gold Medal, though below the Chickerings, while in 1862 they were utterly overshadowed by Broadwood of London, and were only mentioned the eighth on the list of best makers, notwithstanding that they have advertised for several years the glaring falsehood, that they got the first prize over 269 of the best European makers, and had interpolated that word of pregnant meaning, as regards pianos—*Sympathetic*, which was *not* mentioned in the report of the Jury of the World's Fair in London, in 1862.

The whole course of the Steinways on this occasion, has been reprehensible in the highest degree. In a business point of view, judging business from the American standpoint, and admitting that money well laid out in advertisements, and subornation of the accredited critics and correspondents, will influence all the papers of this City, except the *N. Y. Herald*, which is not controlled by its critics, and is therefore clear from outside influence, their course was shrewd, and was calculated to work for their benefit. But they overdid the thing. Their pensioners, in Paris, wrote such bombastic twaddle, invented such munchausen lies, so ridiculed and falsified great artists, and so scandalously maligned and belittled the rival they feared, and the superior they acknowledged in their hearts, that even their friends deplored the fatuity of their business management. At least three of our evening daily papers, share the obloquy of being the publishing accomplices, through their correspondents, of this vicious attempt to make public opinion in America, by purchased lies written in Paris.

In addition to this, the Steinways, acting

upon a well arranged telegram from Paris, some weeks ago, caused to be published far and wide through the States, that they had received the first prize over all competitors in the Paris Exposition, adding with more truth than they would care to admit, that it was a sequel to their triumph in London in 1862, but omitting to say, that, in this case, they were second best, while, in London, they came out eighth in the list. We believe, however, in justice to the Steinways that they were really deceived in the matter of the aforesaid telegram, or they would not have hoisted their flag, nor would they have rejoiced festively with the Widow Cliquo if they had not given full credence to bogus information. They fully appreciate the drawing of wool over the eyes of the great country outside of New York, but they would not, willingly, subject themselves to the ridicule of the metropolis.

There is one thing that troubles us, and in the absence of details of the awards, which is, that we have no information in regard to the only other exhibitor from America, Lindeman & Sons, of New York. Their "Cycloid" piano-forte, was certainly worthy of special notice. We tried and examined the instrument before it was sent away, and we considered it a superb specimen of the ultra square piano-forte. It was grand in its sonority, in its sympathetic and brilliant tone, and in all the details of touch and construction, and we cannot believe that so splendid a specimen of the piano-forte, could have been passed by juries so competent, without having received the brilliant recognition it so richly deserved. We know the firm had no representative in Paris, and that at least one powerful rival would throw its potent weight in the scale in opposition, but we have faith that the competent experts, unless their attention was averted, will have given due consideration to its truly grand qualities.

And now to say a few words upon the course of the *ART JOURNAL*, in regard to the internecine piano-forte warfare, forced upon the Chickerings by the reckless statements and grandiloquent puffs disseminated by the Steinway's, whose hand has been against all, even against those struggling bravely into public acceptance. We have, for years, maintained and still maintain, the supremacy of the Chickering piano-fortes. We chose them for the qualities they possessed; for those qualities which great artists required to display their executive and intellectual powers; namely: the singing power with perfect purity of vibration, and that mobility of tone, which affords to such artists as Thalberg, Gottschalk, Wehli, Hoffman, Strakosch, and other grandly great artists, who have always used the Chickering piano in America, the amplest means of

developing their highest art instincts, their most delicate and refined imaginings, and their most tender and most passionate emotions. Our position has been maintained in advance of this European test, by the fact, that while the Steinway piano-forte has been used only by resident artists, the most eminent of whom, have been in receipt of salaries from Steinway & Sons, the Chickering pianos have been chosen by the greatest artists who have visited us from the Old World, and have testified, that, in the Chickering piano, they have found in the highest degree, those qualities which afford to the performer, the greatest amount of assistance in developing his grandest, and most tender and beautiful imaginings.

We need no "judgment of Paris," although as he dealt with woman he had a pretty difficult task, to confirm our opinion; we have opposed our opinion several times to the entire press of New York within the last few weeks, and have compelled, individually, a recantation of previously expressed opinion. We do not feel elated at such a brilliant result, for the reason that ninety-nine hundredths of said critics, are entirely ignorant of the first principles of musical knowledge, and are only chosen by the leading journals, daily and weekly, because they are cheap, and, consequently available.

The ART JOURNAL, so long sustained by the best native and foreign professors in America, has again come out triumphant in its opinion, by the sustainment of that opinion, by a foreign nation, of the entire supremacy of the piano-fortes of Chickering & Sons, of New York and Boston, over all others.

#### THE AWARDS AT THE EXPOSITION.

On Monday last, the first day of July, the Emperor of the French, Louis Napoleon, in presence of all the dignitaries of the Empire, and the foreign sovereigns, presented the Gold Medals to the successful exhibitors. Among the fortunate few who won this high distinction, were Chickering & Sons of New York and Boston, and Steinway & Sons of New York. The decisions of the Juries were announced two or three days previous, through the Associated Press despatch, which named all the recipients. In this despatch, either by mistake or design, the name of Steinway was made to precede that of Chickering. It is true that it did not matter much, as it was stated, in advance, of the presentation; but it is rather singular, that such mistakes always occur for the benefit of the Steinways, so that it would seem that some special power attended to their interests, right or wrong. This mistake (!) has already been turned to account, for as soon as the news of the actual presentation reached them, and they found that they were placed second to Chickering,

they issued the following advertisement, which contains just as much truth as the previous advertisement recounting the extraordinary honors (!) they won at the London Exhibition in 1862. The cunningly worded document is as follows:—

**AMERICAN PIANOS IN THE PARIS EXPOSITION.**—At noon yesterday STEINWAY & SONS, of New York, received a cable telegram informing them that they had been awarded A FIRST GOLD MEDAL, for "greatest perfection in grand, square and upright Pianos," with strongest endorsement of the jury, thus corroborating the official press despatch, which placed them at the head of the list of all competitors.

Considering the facts of the case, can any thing be more ingenious or more exquisitely truthful? But it will go down with those who do not know the true state of the affair, and that is just the object they wish to obtain.

The *N. Y. Herald*, with its usual liberal enterprise in the service of the Public, published in a special despatch on Tuesday, the full particulars of the magnificent and imposing ceremonies attending the distribution of the prizes by the Emperor. One paragraph in it, excited much curiosity and anxious speculation. It was as follows: "Many of the recipients were called up again and received the decoration of the Legion of Honor, the same ceremony being gone through with as in the case of delivering the medals." No names were given, and who were the men so splendidly distinguished was the subject of general guessing during the morning of Tuesday.

Colonel Chickering unexpectedly arrived in New York that morning, and had hardly entered the store when the following cable telegram was received:—

PARIS, July 1st, 1867.

CHICKERING & SONS, 652 Broadway, N. Y.: In addition to a Gold Medal of Honor, I have received to-day, a decoration of the Legion of Honor, which puts us at the head of all Piano Exhibitors.

C. F. CHICKERING.

In all this great piano controversy, we have sustained the superiority of the Chickering pianos, from purely conscientious motives; for we believe them to be the best instruments made in the world, and we had faith in our judgment that they would be recognized abroad as they deserved. But we did not anticipate so magnificent a recognition. The Emperor can bestow no more distinguished a reward than the decoration of the Legion of Honor. It is the highest award in his gift, and is never lightly bestowed. It adds a value to the Gold Medal of such distinction as to completely eclipse the Chickering competitors.

The news spread rapidly abroad and the store was thronged the whole day by friends and strangers who came to congratulate the Firm. The public seemed intensely delighted at the result, for the almost universal

wish, was, that the representative American house should come off triumphant.

As the elder member of the Firm, Brigadier-General Thomas Chickering was present, an impromptu lunch was devised; of which a large number of the friends of the House partook. The company was of a curiously mixed character; there were artists of all kinds, editors, critics, the employees of the establishment, and lastly piano-forte manufacturers, among them the Dunhams, Decker Brothers, A. Weber, Raven and Bacon, Geib, Knabe and others whose names we forget. The occasion was very festive, very cordial, and generously unanimous. The Widow Clicquot was communed with on this occasion liberally, and with some show of reason, for the great prize was achieved beyond the shadow of a doubt. Many speeches were made, although the meeting was quite informal and unpremeditated. That by Mr. Raven, one of the oldest and best manufacturers in the city, was in admirable taste, expressing the sentiment of all the makers present, that though they were necessarily rivals, and each naturally thought his instruments the best, still they all rejoiced at the success of so honorable and enterprising a firm as that of Chickering & Sons. Mr. Raven was loudly applauded at the close of his observations.

Mr. G. W. Morgan also made a pleasant and appropriate speech, saying that he belonged to no cliques and no parties, and that he wished well to all the piano firms, and hoped, with all his heart, that the best man might win.

Mr. Ed. Hoffman, who had just been playing in a brilliant and finished manner, was toasted, and returned thanks, disclaiming all right to the honor, and abdicating in favor of his talented wife, M<sup>me</sup> Varian Hoffman. The lady's name was received with marked honor. Mr. C. B. Burrell replied to the toast, "The Attaches of the House of Chickering," in a brief, earnest and appropriate speech. Of course, the "Colonel" was called out, and said the right things in the right way. Mr. C. G. Rosenberg made the most brilliant speech of the afternoon; it was both earnest and eloquent.

The remarks were interspersed by some very fine music, discoursed upon some of Chickering's superb Grands, by G. W. Morgan, Ed. Hoffman, and Charles Fradel displaying, to great advantage, his fine faculty for extemporization. As an extempore entertainment it was a perfect success, and served to bring out the good feeling of fellowship, so rarely expressed among rivals in trade.

It was a source of gratification to all, that during the whole period, between the day of the opening of the Exposition, and the day of the presentation of awards, there had